

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:744
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2004
ASSISTANCE TO PEPPER CULTIVATORS
Karunakaran Shri P.

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has realized that the bilateral agreement between India and Sri Lanka exempting import duty has adversely affected the Pepper growers in the country;
- (b) whether the Government has noticed that the huge amount of pepper which is being channelised through Sri Lanka has brought down the price of pepper in India; and
- (c) if so, the measures the Government propose to take to assist pepper cultivators in the country especially in Kerala?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA)

- (a): Yes, Sir. The quantum of import of pepper from Sri Lanka has registered a steep increase after effecting exemption of duty in import of pepper from Sri Lanka under the India – Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement.
- (b): The decline in domestic prices can not be exclusively attributed to duty free imports from Sri Lanka. Imports of pepper from other countries such as Vietnam and Indonesia have also gone up in recent years, alongwith decline in the international prices also.
- (c): During the 3rd Commerce Secretary Level Talks between India and Sri Lanka held in August, 2004 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, both sides agreed to establish a monitoring mechanism to prevent the circumvention of Rules of Origin which will protect our farmers including State of Kerala.